

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

~~In a computer network having a host computer and at least one other computer in communication with said host computer, a method of implementing a virtual network interface between a first software application having a virtual network identity, residing on said host computer, and a second software application, residing on the other computer, attempting to establish a connection with said first application, comprising the steps of:~~


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- (a) assigning a unique virtual IP address and virtual hostname ~~that are unique~~ to a first application residing on a first computer while the first application is running;
 - (b) said first application requesting to connect to a port on ~~a host~~ said first computer using a known port and a wildcard address;
 - (c) using the virtual IP address as a local address to connect the first application to said port;
 - (d) resolving a request to connect to said first application from a second application running on a second computer in communication with said first computer, said second process wherein said resolving comprises to connect to said first application by resolving said virtual hostname to said local address; and
 - (e) connecting said second application to said first application using said local address.

2. (Currently amended) The method process of claim 1, wherein resolving said virtual hostname to said local address ~~said step of resolving a request from said second process to connect to said first application by resolving said virtual hostname to said local address~~ comprises the step steps of said second application supplying

said virtual hostname to a module that maintains associations between virtual hostnames and virtual addresses, and said module returning the virtual address to said second application.

3. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

~~In a computer network having a host computer and at least one other computer in communication with said host computer, a method of implementing a virtual network interface between a first software application having a virtual network identity, residing on said host computer, attempting to establish a connection with a second software application, residing on the other computer, comprising the steps of:~~

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- (a) assigning a unique virtual IP address and virtual hostname ~~that are unique to a first application~~ residing on a first computer while the first application is running;
 - ~~(b)~~ said first application requesting to connect to a port and address of a second application running on a second computer in communication with said first computer ~~the second computer to which the second application is connected;~~ and
 - (c) resolving the virtual IP address of the first application as a local address to connect the first application to said second application.

4. (Currently amended) A computer readable medium including program instructions executable to implement a method comprising:

~~A computer program product, which when executed on a computer in a computer network having a host computer and at least one other computer in communication with said host computer, a method of implementing a virtual network interface between a first software application having a virtual network identity, residing on said host computer, and a second software application, residing on the other computer, attempting to establish a connection with said first application, executes the steps of:~~

- (a) assigning a unique virtual IP address and virtual hostname ~~that are unique to a first application~~ residing on a first computer while the first application is running;

- (b) said first application requesting to connect to a port on a host said first computer ~~using a known port and a wildcard address;~~
- (c) using the virtual IP address as a local address to connect the first application to said port;
- (d) resolving a request to connect to said first application from a second application running on a second computer in communication with said first computer, said second process wherein said resolving comprises ~~to connect to said first application by~~ resolving said virtual hostname to said local address; and
- (e) connecting said second application to said first application using said local address.


5. (Currently amended) A computer readable medium including program instructions executable to implement a method comprising:

~~A computer program product, which when executed on a computer in a computer network having a host computer and at least one other computer in communication with said host computer, a method of implementing a virtual network interface between a first software application having a virtual network identity, residing on said host computer, attempting to establish a connection with a second software application, residing on the other computer, executes the steps of:~~

- (a) assigning a unique virtual IP address and virtual hostname ~~that are unique to a first application residing on a first computer while the first application is running;~~
- (b) said first application requesting to connect to a port and address of a second application running on a second computer in communication with said first computer ~~the second computer to which the second application is connected;~~ and
- (c) resolving the virtual IP address of the first application as a local address to connect the first application to said second application.

6. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 4, wherein resolving said virtual hostname to said local address comprises the steps of said second application supplying said virtual hostname to a module that maintains associations between

virtual hostnames and virtual addresses, and said module returning the virtual address to said second application.

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7. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual hostname is dynamically assigned.
 8. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual hostname is preassigned.
 9. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual IP address is dynamically assigned.
 10. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual IP address is preassigned.
 11. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the virtual hostname is dynamically assigned.
 12. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the virtual hostname is preassigned.
 13. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the virtual IP address is dynamically assigned.
 14. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the virtual IP address is preassigned.
 15. (New) The method of claim 3, further comprising registering the virtual hostname and virtual IP address with a snapshot framework.
 16. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 4, wherein the virtual hostname is dynamically assigned.
 17. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 4, wherein the virtual hostname is preassigned.
 18. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 4, wherein the virtual IP address is dynamically assigned.

19. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 4, wherein the virtual IP address is preassigned.

20. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 5, wherein the virtual hostname is dynamically assigned.

21. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 5, wherein the virtual hostname is preassigned.

22. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 5, wherein the virtual IP address is dynamically assigned.

23. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 5, wherein the virtual IP address is preassigned.

24. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 5, wherein the method further comprises registering the virtual hostname and virtual IP address with a snapshot framework.